



3-4 AHB Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 4

November 2005

BATTALION COMMANDER

To our Comanche Soldiers and Families,

A "Great Place" hello to our Comanche Soldiers and families! I am very proud of your incredible accomplishments this past year. You are an exceptional "band of brothers" who have trained hard and are ready for our deployment to Iraq.

Many descriptions come to mind for this unit, but pride, leadership, teamwork and caring quickly rise to the surface. With these exceptional attributes spread across our seven command teams, you have simply excelled while completing the most aggressive training program I have ever witnessed. Not only did you complete this program with honors and excellence, but with an incredible safety record while deployed, at work, in our barracks, and at home. I congratulate you all for this milestone, and challenge us to keep safety, standards, and Army Values always at the forefront of our actions.

Jo-Ann and I thank all of our wonderful Family Readiness Group (FRG) Representatives, Key Callers, Meals on Wheels, and Go or Care Team members. Without you, we are not a complete Army Family. Our Soldiers and families truly rely and thank you for your incredible offerings of personal resources and time in keeping this unit fit to fight.

To all our Families, as we deploy I ask you to become involved with your company FRG Representatives. This may be as simple as making contact on the phone or email. Further, the extension of offering your support as required will be greatly appreciated by all. Please let your company FRG Representative know if you will be away from town for more than three days. We must have the ability to always maintain some form of contact with you, whether here or away from Fort Hood. Methods include cell phone, email, or telephone numbers at relative's houses. This is for official use only and will be held confidentially. Thank you for being conscious of this important facet to our unit having a successful

deployment.

We welcome as our Battalion Rear Detachment Command Team Captain Nick Dille and Sergeant First Class Javier Cruz. These two incredible leaders were handpicked by CSM Long and myself with the sole purpose of taking care of any Soldiers still at Fort Hood and all our families. I encourage you to attend our monthly Rear Detachment FRG Briefing to be held the first Tuesday of every month. Exact times and locations will be published through our company FRG Key Caller list.

I thank CPT Michelle Avolio for her leadership, vision and effort with establishing the first Air Assault Company in the division. Her Tomahawk Team simply excelled with leading Army Aviation transformation. Your leadership has this command ready to deploy and succeed. We thank you, and welcome you as the new Battalion S4. With that, we welcome CPT Steve Snyder and 1SG Scott Bailey as the new HQ Co Black Dragon Command Team. Also, CPT Chris Clyde to the A Co Tomahawk Command Team. To the B Co Bravo Brave Command Team we welcome SFC James Libbey as the new 1SG. We also welcome CPT Buck Anderson as our new D Co Dark Riders Commander and 1SG Mitchell McElroy as the E Co Warpath 1SG.

To offset the separation of our loved ones, I rest easier knowing your sacrifices enable our super warriors to remain at the forefront protecting our freedom at home by fighting our Nation's enemy abroad. Many thanks for what you all do to make this a great unit.

May you and your families have a super holiday season and Happy New Year.

Very Sincerely,

Mike and Jo-Ann Gawkins
Comanche 06

This 3-4 AHB newsletter contains official information and complies with the provisions of AR 360-81, AR 25-51, and Ft Hood's MOI for dissemination of newsletters.

MICHAEL J. GAWKINS
LTC, AV
Commanding



Command Sergeant Major's "AO"

Greetings and "Comanche Pride" to all Soldiers and family members of our awesome organization! As I reflect back on achievements we have accomplished together, as a military-family team, I realize that we are truly an "awesome organization" in all that we have done and will continue to do. I share my overwhelming pride with our Battalion Commander, LTC Michael Gawkins, as we often talk about the significant accomplishments that both our wonderful Comanche Soldiers and our supportive families have attained together. I look forward to seeing the continuing support that will come from the home front to help our Soldiers have a successful and safe deployment.

We have indeed trained hard, made many sacrifices, and are ready to do our "Nations Business" in Iraq, as we near deployment. It is my hope that you all have been able to enjoy some well-deserved leave and quality family time. I furthermore hope that you have, and will continue, to build strong and healthy relationships with your loved ones. This building of mutual support between the Soldier and family members will pay big dividends to making this organization function and complete our assigned missions in a combat environment. This Soldier-Family team building can never be underestimated when it comes to mission success.

To our Comanche spouses and those who support our Soldiers, Joyce and I want you to know whole-heartedly that your untiring efforts and selfless-support are something of great value to each and every Comanche Soldier. Without this genuine contribution and dedication to our nation, we would truly fail at what we are to accomplish during our deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. We personally want to say to each and every one of you "Thanks for a job well done and please continue to support your Soldier!"

To our Comanche Soldiers, "You are ready!" Trust in one another and in your military training that you have received over the past few months. The many challenges and demanding training schedules you've overcome have developed and honed your war-fighting skills. Just as the 4th Infantry Division March, that you sing proudly every day spells out, you are truly "The Nation's Finest Soldiers" and "America's Best!"

Comanche 07



Black Dragons

HQ CO, 3-4 AVN, 4ID (M)

I would like to begin by recognizing a significant change to the Black Dragon team. 1SG Bailey assumed responsibility of Headquarters Company in September 2005 succeeding 1SG Dvorsky. 1SG Bailey hails from our very close neighbor, Echo Company. Since the establishment of Echo Company 1SG Bailey has been the Echo Company vanguard; leading the company through several deployments and training events. The Black Dragons are fortunate to have gained such fine NCO.

The last few months have been the busiest of my military career; definitely the busiest for the Black Dragons. During a few short months the Black Dragons deployed to the National Training Center, conducted and qualified on all of our weapons systems, completed driver training, fielded armored vehicles, supported relief efforts in New Orleans, completed combat life saver and night vision goggle driver training, and conducted multiple classes and briefs all designed to ensure that our team is ready for Iraq. The training received during the last ten months was designed to build a cohesive team capable of deploying. The training is nearing an end and the Black Dragons will soon implement in Iraq what we have learned in Texas, California, and Colorado. Your sons, daughters, and spouses are ready. They will make us and the country proud.

I end this letter with a heartfelt farewell. As many of you are aware I am leaving the Black Dragon team. Although I am leaving the company I am not leaving the battalion. I am moving a short distance to the flight line to assume command of Alpha Company. The successes that the company had during the last 10 months are directly attributed to the efforts of your sons, daughters, and spouses. I truly believe that I would not be afforded the opportunity for a second command if not for their tireless work effort. I do leave you in very capable hands. CPT Steve Snyder, his wife Tracey, and their two sons, Alex and Jackson stand ready to command the Black Dragon Team. CPT Snyder is a former NCO and Warrant Officer and is highly dedicated to duty and family. I have no doubt he will continue to build on the successes of the Black Dragons.

Although it may be difficult during the last few months before our deployment please concentrate on good things and have a safe, enjoyable holiday season.

Respectfully,

Chris Clyde
Black Dragon 06

Tomahawks

A CO, 3-4 AVN, 4ID (M)

What an amazing and busy quarter we have had. Alpha Company led the way by deploying six UH-60s and 32 soldiers to the National Training Center in Fort Irwin, California. Upon our redeployment in August, we supported 4th Brigade Combat Team during their Mission Readiness Exercise and prepared for a follow-on mission with 4th BCT when Hurricane Katrina arose. Your husbands, wives, sons and daughters rose admirably to the task of a quick response and then flying for eight hours a day as they rescued over 1700 evacuees. Despite their exhaustion, everybody put their game face on every day while in Louisiana. Many of you were there to welcome us as we came back and I truly appreciate the support you have constantly given your spouses and children. Upon our arrival, Alpha Company began the daunting task of conducting both a ground and aerial gunnery while concurrently preparing aircraft as they came out of pre-deployment modifications in order that the aircraft could deploy prior to 1 NOV. Again, the Tomahawks displayed their true colors as they showed up for work (including Saturdays and Sundays) ready to make the mission happen. And they are making the mission happen. I have no doubt at the end of this quarter, the Tomahawks are ready to deploy and lead the Battalion into combat. They are ready because of a "total effort" put forth by each individual in the Company and can also be attributed to the families of Alpha. Of special mention, we added another member to the Tomahawks. Congratulations SPC Jacob and Brenda Klawitter with your little boy!

This is my final letter for the Tomahawks. I am finishing my command time with Alpha Company and bid you all a fond farewell. It has been an amazing time for me and my husband. Our involvement in all your lives has truly been a privilege. You will continue to forge ahead and have great and wonderful successes with the incoming Commander, CPT Christopher Clyde. Chris and his wife Kim have led the HHC team as Commander and FRG leader now for 10 months and will be ready to assume responsibility over Alpha Company.

Enjoy the precious little time you have remaining with your spouses and Thank you again for your support.

CPT Michelle Avolio
Tomahawk 06

Braves

B CO, 3-4 AVN, 4ID (M)

It's been another busy time for the Braves. Since June 15th, we have flown over 800 hours including approximately 300 hours at the NTC. B Co continues to lead the battalion in readiness rate and hours flown. This should come as no surprise as it is a direct result of all of the great soldiers and officers in the unit. As I write, we are completing training on our last group of pilots and crewchiefs while simultaneously preparing our equipment for deployment. Recent progressions to Readiness Level 1 Night Vision Goggles include: SPC Leal, SPC Victory, CPT McBride, CW2 Haney, and CW2 Kirschbaum. Congratulations to all.

Two days after Bravo Company returned from the National Training Center, we sent four helicopters, and a group of eight soldiers led by CPT McBride to support relief efforts in the New Orleans Area as part of Task Force Eagle. The group rescued people stranded throughout the city and saved countless lives. CPT McBride, CW4 Seanard, CW2 Rahn, CW2 Mills, CW2 Sandles, CW2 Kirschbaum, SGT Holliday, and SGT Williams exemplified dedication and professionalism throughout and helped ease the suffering of their fellow Americans in the disaster stricken city. They flew over 100 hours in little over a weeks time.

B-Co FRG would like to thank all the soldiers and spouses who volunteered their time to assist in FRG events and fundraisers. We thank all those who helped at the FRG car wash at Dairy Queen in July. The event raised over \$300. We also thank those who participated in the Battalion yard sale and donated items or time to make the event a success.

CPT Rob Klarenbach

Warriors

C CO, 3-4 AVN, 4ID (M)

It has been a busy couple of months since our last entry in the Comanche newsletter. We conducted 4BCT Platoon Lanes, had a successful Aerial Gunnery, and finished up with an excellent NTC Rotation in September. Coupled with all of that great Army field training has been some serious maintenance due to aircraft modifications and lots of familiarization and training with the new equipment we'll be taking to Iraq. We are proud to have accomplished so much in such a short time.

Over the next month and a half we'll be slowing down the work pace a bit and doing all that we can to spend more time at home with our families. We're even going to try and slip a little leave into our November plans. Household fall clean-up and final family preparations for deployment are the main events on the calendar.

Welcome to our newest Warrior Flight soldiers and their families. SFC Kevin Johnson, CW2 Mike & Leslie Vazquez, SSG David & Rosie Bonin. And a very special welcome to our newest little soldier – Lilyana Brocato who weighed in at 7 pounds 15 ounces!

Our success with building the Warriors is a testament to all of the hard work each member of the team contributes daily. Given the least amount of time, oldest equipment, and newest soldiers in the battalion the Warriors have accomplished more in the six months since our activation than most can in a year or longer. I thank everyone for the tremendous amount of effort you give all of the time.

Warriors!

CPT Spencer Anderson
1SG Michael Davis



Darkriders

D CO, 3-4 AVN, 4ID (M)

I will first introduce myself as D CO's new Commander. My name is CPT Robert "Buck" Anderson and along with my wonderful wife Kristen we want to thank you all for such a warm reception into the company. I am proud and honored to be asked to lead these fine soldiers into the future as we blaze trails into history.

The Dark riders have had a busy few weeks. We deployed company teams to three consecutive NTC rotations as well as Hurricane Katrina relief throughout the months of July to September, proving the concept of lethal modular task force elements. Additionally, we continue preparing for deployment. Almost all of our equipment and vehicles have been loaded for rail movement to the port while our soldiers are playing an integral part in the preparations for aircraft movement forward. This is a daunting task as our soldiers continue to battle the aircraft just returning from modifications as well as routine maintenance in order to prepare them for shipment.

Our outstanding FRG and its leadership have also done outstanding the last few weeks. Mrs. April Bibey and Mrs. Mellissa Searl have really done an amazing job with this program. We raised over \$645 through a silent auction and a bake sale. Well Done! In November, Mrs. Johnetta Howell will be stepping into the role of FRG Leader as April Bibey will be returning home during deployment. Mrs. Fawndrea Zenon has also volunteered to be an FRG Assistant Leader. I am very appreciative to all these family members for their great attitude and service.

These truly are exciting times. The Darkriders are prepared for what the future holds. We are equipped, trained, disciplined, and ready to support our nation in its time of need. Additionally, we have full faith and confidence in the FRG and the Battalion's rear detachment to take care of our soldiers and families that will not be deploying with us.

Finally, I want to thank the soldiers and families of the Darkrider team for their sacrifices and daily effort in both working for and supporting our company and Battalion.

Newest Darkriders:

Cori Allen Taylor
Born 23 Aug
boyl, 7 lbs, 10 oz

David TylerTwine
Born 15 Sep
boy, 10lbs, 3 oz

"Riders" Promotions:

SGT Wilson
SGT Davidson
SPC Choi
SPC Kills In Water
PFC Butts
PFC Morgan
PFC Howell

Congrats to ANCOC Graduates:

SSG(P) Jones

Congrats to PLDC Graduates

SPC Wolf

Welcome:

HQs: WO1 Zenon

Darkriders 6 & 7

Important Numbers

Bde SDO **254-287-3541**

CPT Dille **254-553-2208**

SFC Cruz **254-553-2208**



Warpath
E CO, 3-4 AVN, 4ID (M)

Hello 3-4 Aviation, it's been a busy couple of months. Echo WARPETH in support of Task Force 3-4 has just finished up a successful rotation at the National Training Center where our POL and Maintenance platoons honed their skills and the whole company had a chance to train in convoy operations. While we were gone our rear detachment did an outstanding job of running the remainder of the company and pushing out support to help the victims of Katrina.

We are now in full pre-deployment mode as we begin packing up all of our equipment, receiving new up-armored vehicles and going to classes preparing us for our upcoming deployment to IRAQ. I ask that you have patience with your spouse as they continue to work long hours for a couple more weeks as we push all of this equipment to the rail yard and the port. I know it's hard on the families, but it is necessary in order to properly prepare our Soldiers.

In November our pace has slowed down and everyone will be able to spend some much needed quality time with their families. Speaking of families, we have had quite a few recent additions to the WARPETH family with several births and a couple of marriages.

In addition we said farewell to 1SG Bailey who only went as far as next door to HQ company and welcomed in a new 1SG, 1SG McElroy and his family. I would again like to take this time to welcome all of you into our family and wish everyone in the company a blessed holiday season.

CPT Roger Wayne
WARPETH 6



Rear Detachment (R Co)
R CO, 3-4 AVN, 4ID(M)

Rear Detachment stood up as R Co on 3 October 2005. Our company consists of soldiers who are currently non-deployable. Our mission is to manage out of theater challenges and facilitate in-theater conditions for success. Our main focus is to provide support and care for families, command all non-deployable soldiers, and maintain accountability of stay behind equipment. We are looking forward to supporting all soldiers and families during this deployment.

We hope to be of service during the deployment and wish all of our families that are moving out of the area a safe trip and also ask that you remain in touch with us. This will be a very trying period for most, but if we support each other and stay in touch, we will be stronger. Our Soldiers have a mission and they depend on our support, let's provide them with that support.

On behalf of myself and SFC Cruz, we welcome the challenge and feel honored to be here with you as your support structure.
We hope to see you soon.

CPT Nick Dille
SFC Javier Cruz



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

3rd Battalion, 4th Aviation
4th Infantry Division (M)
Fort Hood, Texas 76544

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